

Abstract 737

TITLE: The Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling -A Six Step Protocol

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ISSUE: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) national HIV prevention counseling training effort must reflect the most recent counseling intervention research findings. The findings of the CDC national research initiative, Project RESPECT, have confirmed that HIV prevention counseling works and is more effective than delivering only educational messages.

SETTING: HIV prevention counseling settings.

PROJECT: The existing client-centered HIV prevention counseling protocol was modified to incorporate many of the lessons learned from Project RESPECT. Project RESPECT compared the effectiveness of three counseling interventions: a typical, brief (2-session) information-oriented intervention, a brief (2-session) HIV prevention counseling intervention involving a specific client-centered protocol, and a more extensive (4-session) prevention counseling intervention.

RESULTS: The new HIV prevention counseling protocol has resulted in a new training curriculum, Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling, which contains a primary focus on a six-step HIV prevention counseling protocol. The six steps of the protocol are: 1) introduce and orient client to session; 2) identify client's personal risk behaviors and circumstances; 3) identify safer goal behaviors; 4) develop client action plan; 5) make referrals and provide support; and 6) summarize and close session.

LESSONS LEARNED: Providing a prevention focused HIV counseling session requires training which provides a specific structure to help counselors more effectively support clients to 1) identify their personal circumstances and HIV risk behavior, 2) identify specific risk reduction goals, and 3) develop a realistic, personalized action plan to achieve these goals.

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